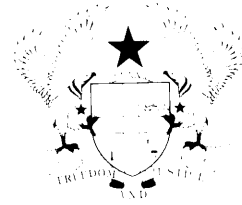


# GHANA



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## STATEMENT

BY

**LT-COL SETH OHENE-ASARE (rtd.)**  
CHAIRMAN, GHANA NATIONAL COMMISSION ON  
SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

AT THE

**4<sup>TH</sup> BIENNIAL MEETING OF STATES (BMS4)**  
**ON SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS**

*NEW YORK,  
14<sup>TH</sup>-18<sup>TH</sup> JUNE, 2010*

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation associates itself with the statements made both by Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and Nigeria, on behalf of the African Group.

Mr. Chairman,

The dangerous and unacceptable situation of illicit proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons is globally acknowledged. It threatens political stability, human safety and security, democracy, and human rights. Socio-economic development and activities are disrupted, and perhaps the most disturbing aspect of it is its close linkage with terrorism, organized crime, drugs and human trafficking; the bane of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Through the adoption of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects, other Regional Protocols and Conventions have been evolved within the framework of the World Body. These interventions, especially in West Africa, the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms, National Commissions and civil society, have played no mean role in ameliorating the tension which their absence might have escalated. But the fact has to be acknowledged though that we are not at the desired goal yet.

Mr. Chairman,

The situation of Ghana is that she occupies a Sub-Region which unfortunately has recently seen a great deal of havoc wreaked by the comparative easy access to Small Arms and Light Weapons. Although the country has not been thrown into a situation of open and widespread armed conflict, it has nevertheless had its share of isolated communal armed skirmishes with their attendant negative consequences. The illegal transfer of Small Arms and Light Weapons through porous borders, leakages from stockpiles, and to some considerable extent, local production of SALW by artisans have facilitated these unfortunate incidents.

In this regard, Ghana is fully committed to the implementation of the UNPoA and the ECOWAS Convention, which came into force in September 2009, to address these challenges.

Mr. Chairman,

Ghana continues to spare no efforts in the fight against the proliferation of SALW. The notorious issue of local manufacture, however, poses a great challenge at the moment. The practice is banned under the country's laws; but it is universally acknowledged that the craft is deeply embedded in the socio-culture of our people for hunting, cultural festivals, and game. Criminals taking undue advantage of the situation have caused the increase of the demand of their production, which threatens security of society. In response, the law has recently (some 7 months ago) been tightened and made it a first degree felony. But a further solution will be the provision of an alternative livelihood programme for these artisans, with the hope of weaning them from arms production to non-lethal products.

On legislation, Ghana has been reviewing the laws and regulations on SALW, their control, policies and initiatives to harmonise them with international conventions and protocols which she has subscribed to.

What remains now is technical and financial assistance to implement programmes on Marking and Tracing, Stockpile Management, Brokering, improved border surveillance and policing, and we shall remain focused to achieve it. This is one area that Ghana hopes to benefit from technical and financial support from our international partners.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, daunting as the challenges may be, with deep sense of commitment from all and sundry, I am confident that the threat will be ameliorated and indeed eradicated. Society requires that of us.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.